TRAILS, TALES AND TIMES

Upper Rogue Historical Society, Inc. (non-profit)
Trail Creek Tavern Museum
144 Old Hwy. 62
Trail, Oregon 97541 (next door to the Post Office)

NEWSLETTER OF UPPER ROGUE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LOGGING DISPLAYS TELL OF EARLY DAYS

by Jim Collier

The museum has been offered several large old pieces of logging equipment used prior to and during World War II. These pieces are being cleaned and refurbished at the present time. Later this summer, they will be placed around the perimeter of the parking area. Carl Jantzer is putting this project together. We all owe him a hearty "thank you" for his interest and work in this effort. One exhibit we would like to see added is a "filing shack" with its attendent artifacts and related items. We would appreciate hearing from anyone having knowledge and perhaps experience of working around such equipment, so that we can put together an authentic display.

The community of Trail was the logging hub for many years on th Upper Rogue. Steve Wilson's sho was located there. Many logger stopped at the tavern to "wash th dust out of their throats" on th way home. Many of the wood crew would catch the "crummy" c a morning at Trail. The cars woul be there all day to be retreived whe the men returned in late afternoor There are still people in the Tra community who remember the

Ribbon cutting at the museum opening May 23, 1997. Pictured are Jim Collier, Sheriff Bob Kennedy, Oregon State Trooper Jerry Jacobsen, Harriet Hudspeth and Beverly Clark.

NEW LOGO

I hope you will all notice our new logo at the top of this page. The drawing of the museum is a pencil sketch by Marvin Stout of Shady Cove. Thank you very much Marvin, it is really nice.

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many fallers, buckers, cat-skinners, choker-setters and landing chasers who went out each morning and put in a long hard day's work. The truck drivers had the easy job of riding up and down the roads, bouncing from rock to rock and through mud holes and somehow getting just as dirty and tired as if they had worked all day. Some even thought they had put in a day's work.

GENE AUTRY

Remember the Westerns at the Rialto? One dime would buy a kid a Saturday afternoon with a double feature and a serial. And at the end the cowboy kissed his horse and rode off into the sunset. Or do you enjoy western music? We issue a special invitation to visit the museum and enjoy the Gene Autry collection loaned to us by member Frank Dewey. This includes pictures, posters, records and tapes and should bring back some pleasant memories.

BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman: Jim Collier-878-2259
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Alice Collier-878-2259

Curator: Bobbie Fry-878-2449

Meetings are held on the second Friday of each month at the Trail Tavern Museum at 2:00 p.m. Please plan to attend. Everyone is welcomed.

OLD BRIDGE SERVES AS TRAIL'S LINK TO THE PAST

By Jim Collier

The Upper Rogue Historical Society is trying to preserve the bridge crossing Trail Creek at Trail. A new bridge is being built immediately upstream and is destined to replace the old one for vehicle traffic. We are working with the County Public Works Department to preserve the steel structure for its historic architectural value. Everyone we have talked with wants to preserve the old bridge, except for the National Marine Fisheries Service. They think the bridge should be destroyed, the banks planted with willows to provide for coho salmon habitat and somehow that will improve the fish populations of the Upper Rogue River. No one has figured out how the fish are going to survive when the creek goes dry, as it historically does most summers.

Our museum parking lot will have a changing outdoor display during the summer as the construction of the new bridge takes place. The lot is being used as a place for stored building materials and equipment parking by the contractor while construction is taking place. Anyone using our parking lot needs to be aware of the construction materials and the activity during this period of time. The lot will still be open for people who wish to visit the museum. We hope that MANY people will stop, both to see the museum and watch the construction.

CURATOR CORNER:

QUILT SHOW, REOPENING OF MUSEUM, AND GINGER ROGERS COLLECTION

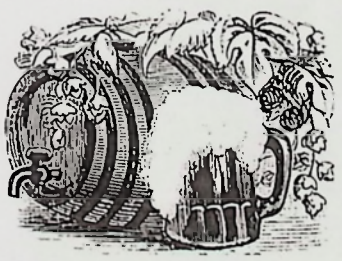
After it seems a very long fall and winter, our museum is opening again. We have undergone a few changes, some paint and picture shelves and what have you, all to make it more enjoyable for all to see.

Our opening week-end will be over Memorial Day. We are planning a Pioneer Quilt Show. I don't believe any of our quilts came over the Oregon Trail in a covered wagon, but most of them were made and used here in Trail or the Upper Rogue area. A few, I'm sure, might have spent some time in a wagon or a buggy.

Trail Creek Tavern Museum is very privileged this year to be housing the Ginger Rogers collection which is on loan to us from Mert and Erlene Thomson. We are very excited about having these previous articles which belonged to Miss Rogers. This collection will be on a rotating basis with the Ginger Rogers Craterian Theater. Thank you so much Mert and Erlene.

We will be waiting for you, so when you are in the area, please plan to stop by.

Bobbie Fry, Curator



"HUCKLEBERRY ALICE"

By Carole Nielson

For centuries Native Americans of the Klamath, Southern Molalla, Upland Takelma and Cow Creek Umpqua Tribes made annual treks to Huckleberry Mountain, a few miles southwest of Crater Lake National Park, to harvest and prepare huckleberries for winter use. The berries were dried in the sun then pounded into pemmican along with dried venison or salmon to supplement their diet during the cold months.

One lady of Klamath ancestry made the trip for so many years during her lifetime, she not only became a legend on the mountain, but was known affectionately as "Huckleberry Alice."

Alice Allen Hamilton was born in 1882 near Keno, Oregon, where her family were early settlers.

When Alice was a child, each berry season would find the Allen family making the trip to Huckleberry Mountain in a horse-drawn wagon. It took them three days to travel from Keno by way of Chiloquin, Fort Klamath and Crater Lake to reach Wagon Camp which was located at the base of the mountain on the banks of Union Creek close to the old military road that ran between Fort Klamath and Jacksonville. The only way to the top of the mountain where the berries grew was by trail, so the wagons had to be left in Wagon Camp. From there it was a dusty, three-mile hike to the top. Gear that could not be carried by the family was tied on the horse. That included enough supplies for a one-to-three month stay. Berries were canned right on the mountain so it was necessary to bring canning jars or tins and even a cookstove. In the early days, fruit jars were hard to come by, so berries were often canned in tins or empty beer or wine bottles, then sealed with wax.

Alice remembered one trip when wash tubs, washboard, Dutch ovens, cooking utensils and canning jars were packed on the horse and feather beds draped over the top. A low-hanging branch ripped a hole in one of the beds. Each step the horse took sent a puff of feathers flying. The spooked animal started bucking, scattering its load all along the trail.

Around the turn-of-the-century, Mr. Joseph Woodruff built a road to the summit of the mountain, making travel to the top by wagon possible. Some old-timers said the road was so steep in one place it took four horses to pull up an empty wagon while on the way down a tree had to be tied to the back of the wagon to keep it from running over the horses' hind feet.

More than 1,500 people camped on the mountain in 1908, including a large number of Klamath Indians, taking advantage of that year's bumper crop of berries. Some folks even brought along their milk cow so they could have fresh milk and butter while in camp. Long-time residents refer to the area as Huckleberry City because it became a tent city every year when the berries were ripe. Huckleberry City can even be found on old Forest Service maps.

Mary Curtis of Prospect remembers the nightly music and dancing that became part of camp life on the mountain. "Alice played .fiddle, guitar and banjo and loved to entertain. She not only always joined in, but was often the instigator of the hoe downs. I played accordion and my brother played the jewsharp. Some folks danced. They usually did simple dances like 'Skip-To-My-Lou' or 'Go-In-and-Out-the-Window'. Others just joined in the singing or clapped along."

Dancing raised such a dust that it was kept away from the main camp. Around 1910, Mr. Woodruff built a dance hall on the mountain. It was a rather crude frame building with a roof of boughs that was taken off in the fall, but it had a wooden floor and served the purpose until it was torn down sometime in the 1920's.

Alice loved to hunt and was known as a crack shot with a rifle. It wasn't unusual for her to shoot a deer, elk or even a bear. In later years, her camp consisted of two tents - one for cooking and one for sleeping and she continued to take her feather beds to camp all her life.

One night Alice was awakened by a racket in her cooking tent. Grabbing her .30-.30 rifle and a flashlight, she went to investigate. Two of her dogs were trying to chase a hungry bear out of the tent. Just as Alice took aim, one of the dogs knocked the gun out of her hands. The shot went off, missed the bear, but blasted off the big toe on Alice's right foot. Friends rushed her to a doctor. Against doctor's orders, Alice was back on the mountain in a few days. Next night, the troublesome bear raided a neighbor's camp. Hobbling on a bandaged foot, with .30-.30 in hand, Alice shot the bear. She was in her late sixties at the time.

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During the Great Depression huckleberry picking provided many families with much-needed cash. Although Alice loved to pick huckleberries, she never sold them, but gave them away freely to family and friends. She came to the mountain as much for the camping and socializing as she did for the berries.

Some people use camping as an excuse to skip baths, but not Alice. Violet Garrett of Prospect, one of Alice's nieces, remembers staying on Huckleberry Mountain with her aunt. "We bathed every day and had to carry our own water to do it!"

Alice had many talents. She was the first telephone operator in Klamath County and besides being a crack shot with a rifle, she was an excellent equestrian. "Alice was a good wildlife artist, had lovely handwriting and was a well-educated lady," recalls Mary Curtis, who first met Huckleberry Alice on the mountain in 1925. "She was a beautiful person both inside and out and the words, 'I can't,' were never in her vocabulary. She used to take me hunting and show me the old Indian places."

Although many people offered to buy her paintings, she never sold them, but like her berries, gave them to family and friends. For as long as Alice lived, her camp was known as the "Allen Camp" and out of respect, no one else every camped in her spot, even if she was late getting to the mountain. Alice never owned a television, but in later years, she brought her battery-powered radio to camp to keep up on current events.

Huckleberry Alice lived to the ripe old age of 88 and made the annual trek to pick huckleberries for well over 80 years, truly becoming a legend on Huckleberry Mountain.

REFERENCES:

Upper Rogue Independent. Eagle Point, OR. "Prospect's Huckleberry Mountain. Still a Traditional Gathering Place" by Loren Pryor, Oct. 19, 1982.

Upper Rogue Independent. Eagle Point, OR. "Huckleberry Alice, a Real Legend on the Mountain" by Loren Pryor, Nov. 2, 1982..

Interviews with Violet Garrett and Mary Curtis, both of Prospect, Oregon.

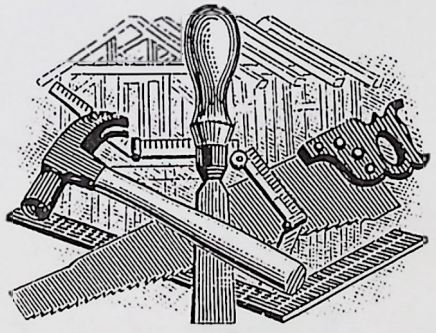
PROFILE: Carole Nielson, Author, Historian

"I've always been interested in history," Carole says. "I was born in northeastern Oklahoma, formerly the Cherokee Nation. The natives call it 'Lapland' - where Arkansas laps over into Oklahoma," she laughs. "It is in the edge of the Ozarks - an area with clear, cold streams, rolling hills and thick hard-wood forests. My great-great-great grandmother was a full-blood Cherokee and came across the 'Trail of Tears' from eastern Tennessee. My great-great grandfather was a scout for the Confederate Army. He and my great-great grandmother came to Texas and then to Indian Territory after the Civil War. They became friends with the Comanche Warrior, Quanah Parker, and frequently had him and his five wives as guests in their home. My great-grandparents were married in Indian Territory where they owned a cattle ranch and my grandfather was born in Indian Territory. Three of my great-grandmother's brothers were outlaws, and one rode with the Doolin-Dalton Gang for a while. Another of her brothers was a cowboy and participated in cattle drives on the Chisolm Trail and yet another was a Texas Ranger. My great-grandmother's cousin was John William Poe, who was Pat Garrett's deputy and was with Garrett when he shot Billie the Kid. Poe was instrumental in tracking down the young outlaw and in the election of 1880, he defeated Pat Garrett and was elected Sheriff of Lincoln County, New Mexico Territory. My great-grandmother was also a third cousin to Edgar Allen Poe.

WISH LIST

The Upper Rogue Historical Society has received many gifts and donations of artifacts and memorabilia to be placed on display. We are in need of funds to construct or purchase suitable cabinets or shelving for the presentation of these items. We also need to change the electrical fixtures to provide better lighting for museum use. Climate control is currently being studied and estimates prepared to solve that problem. Starting with a tavern and restaurant has provided us with a large historic building. However, it's going to take considerable remodeling to make it a good museum.

If you are willing to help either financially, or in any other way, please contact any member of the Board and make your contribution known to us. The Trail community will benefit from the help of everyone. Knowing who to contact is a large part of the successful completion of any project. Please help us make these contacts. Call any member of the Board.



GUEST AUTHOR

I am very pleased to announce our Newsletter will be featuring stories from Carole Nielson, a local writer. I've read every story she has written that has been available to me. I hope you will enjoy them as much as I do.

Bobbie Fry, Curator

Summer Residents

Our Feathered Friends

URHS member Ralph Train reports that the summer residents have returned to the tree, up-river from his house. The osprey pair arrived on March 28 and soon started building their penthouse abode. They are all settled in and occupying their home for the summer.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT IS NEEDED

We are currently updating our membership roles. A few changes have been made to assist in record-keeping.

The membership year was formerly from August to August, no matter when you joined. That has been changed so that everyone's year dates from the month joined. If you join in May, your next year's dues will be due the next May. With our larger number of members, this should ease the burden for reminders. Watch for more "improvements".

There have been some new member categories added. We encourage the $50 life membership to ease our counting at county budget time. Of course, yearly donations would not be turned down!

There are several active roles that members are encouraged to take in the running of the museum. We need greeter-docents to keep the place open more days. Also, substitutes are needed so that the regulars can have a day or two for other activities. Some of you might like to help plan and operate special events, or with keeping the many records we use. If you are interested in any of these activities, you can call one of the officers and let us know.

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ALWAYS USE ZIP CODE

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